The Lions' Pride

Saint Leo University • Friday, September 8, 2017 • Volume LVII No. 3 • Since 1965

Saint Leo Recognizes Purple Heart Recipients with Prime Parking

By Kadyann Stupart
Facebook Manager

On Sept. 1, Saint Leo University designated two student parking spaces on campus for recipients of the Purple Heart award.

The Purple Heart is awarded to members of the U.S. military who have been wounded during war by the hands of the enemy. It is also awarded posthumously to the next of kin should the members have been killed in action or died from wounds received in action.

According to thepurpleheart.com, although there has not been a consistent record kept of recipients of the medals since 1932, it is estimated that 1.8 million purple hearts have been awarded since the medal's establishment by George Washington as a Badge of Military Merit on Aug. 7, 1782.

The parking signs were donated to the university by the Wounded Warriors Family Support, which an independent non-profit organization whose mission is to provide support to the families of those who have been wounded, injured or killed during combat operations.

Photo by Kadyann Stupart

The new desinated Purple Heart recipient spots are located outside the University Technology Services building.

Col. Pamela Martis, director of Military Affairs and Services, felt that the parking spaces are a great addition to the campus.

"[The student parking spaces] are a small recognition that Saint Leo wants to give to the veterans and military who have earned that distinctive honor," said Martis.

She goes on to advise the recipients of the medal to go to either Campus Security or the Office of Military Affairs and Services, located on the first floor of Kirk Hall, to fill out a form and they will be given a sticker which acts as a parking pass to utilize the parking spaces.

The Department of Military affairs has a busy semester ahead of them. Several changes are on the way for ROTC, including a new location on campus, a new Military Resource Center opening on University Campus, and a new officer joining the team.

Senate Elections Are Just Around The Corner

By Allison Cobb
Distribution Manager

There is just under a week before campaigning ends for the Student Government Union Senate Elections.

Many people are unaware of how the Senate operates and who manages the elected Senators. The Vice-President Operations, Mikael Coleman, is the individual on SGU Executive Board who the elected representatives will report to.

Coleman took a moment to explain why the Senate is so important.
"Student Government Union Senate is an extension of SGU's E-board. They are a group of elected 25 students who become the voice and the face of the campus," said Coleman.

The other person that oversees the Senators is the advisor for the Senate, Mr. Frank Orlando, an instructor of political science.

Photo by Wakens Leonard

The Vice President of Operations, Mikael Coleman, is ready to manage the senators with the new advisor, Frank Orlando.

Both Coleman and Orlando emphasized that they want to make the Senate more visible to the campus this year. Coleman said that he has been working closely with the new advisor.

When Orlando was asked about his goals for the Senate this year, he said "more involvement, more engagement, more visibility, and more transparency."

They plan to make the Senate known to the student body by becoming more organized, hosting more events, and showing Saint Leo what they have to offer.

Orlando continued on to say that students on

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Campus News

campus have an impact on their student government. This can be done by voting, keeping up with the activities, and talking to the Senators to help them see the students' point of view. Students can voice their input for what money goes to certain clubs, what events are held, and what performers are brought to campus by getting involved with the Student Senate.

"We both believe that if we buckle down together and work hard with the senators then we will have a successful year," said Coleman.

A total of 48 candidates applied, but only 42 were eligible for candidacy after meeting the minimum requrements.

This year the candidates were asked to confirm their availablity granted that their are no conflicts with their schedule.

The election day for the Senators usually occurs the second Tuesday of September at 12:01 a.m. and ends at 11:59 p.m. The elections are scheduled for Tuesday Sept. 12, pending Hurricane Irma.

As of 5 Sept., the following lists of candidates that have confirmed their availability consists of the following:

Jaclyn Bokowsky
Kenneth Wybieracki
LyZandra Serrano
Giulia Gourgue
Edna Hernandez
Mercedes Contino
Sarah Bermudez
Katherine Holzapfel
Selena Giordano
Laurian Simpson
Amanda Luce
Mikaela Masa
Jacquelyn Diaz-Cobo
Smive Guerdley Aurelien
Taylor Underwood
Kadyann Stupart
Maxx John Brown
Rose Foley
Johnmichael Hernandez
Melissa Kathleen Opie
Quiwanaki Ramsey
Margaret Sroka
Christopher Fernandez
Atiya Lee-Brown
Zarrar Nashman
Jeanine Ramirez
Skylar Heyward
Dulce Estrada
De'Joun Redden
Gina Marie Mejias
Celine Deon Palmer
Danielle Meikle
Romario Williams
Nephtalie Jacques
Shantae Whyte
Maeisha McDermott
Kiera Jeremiah

Newsroom

(352) 588-8316

Student Activities Building, Office 106

33701 State Road 52 Saint Leo, FL 33574

Letters To The Editor

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- No profane or slanderous language
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- Faculty: Include name and rank
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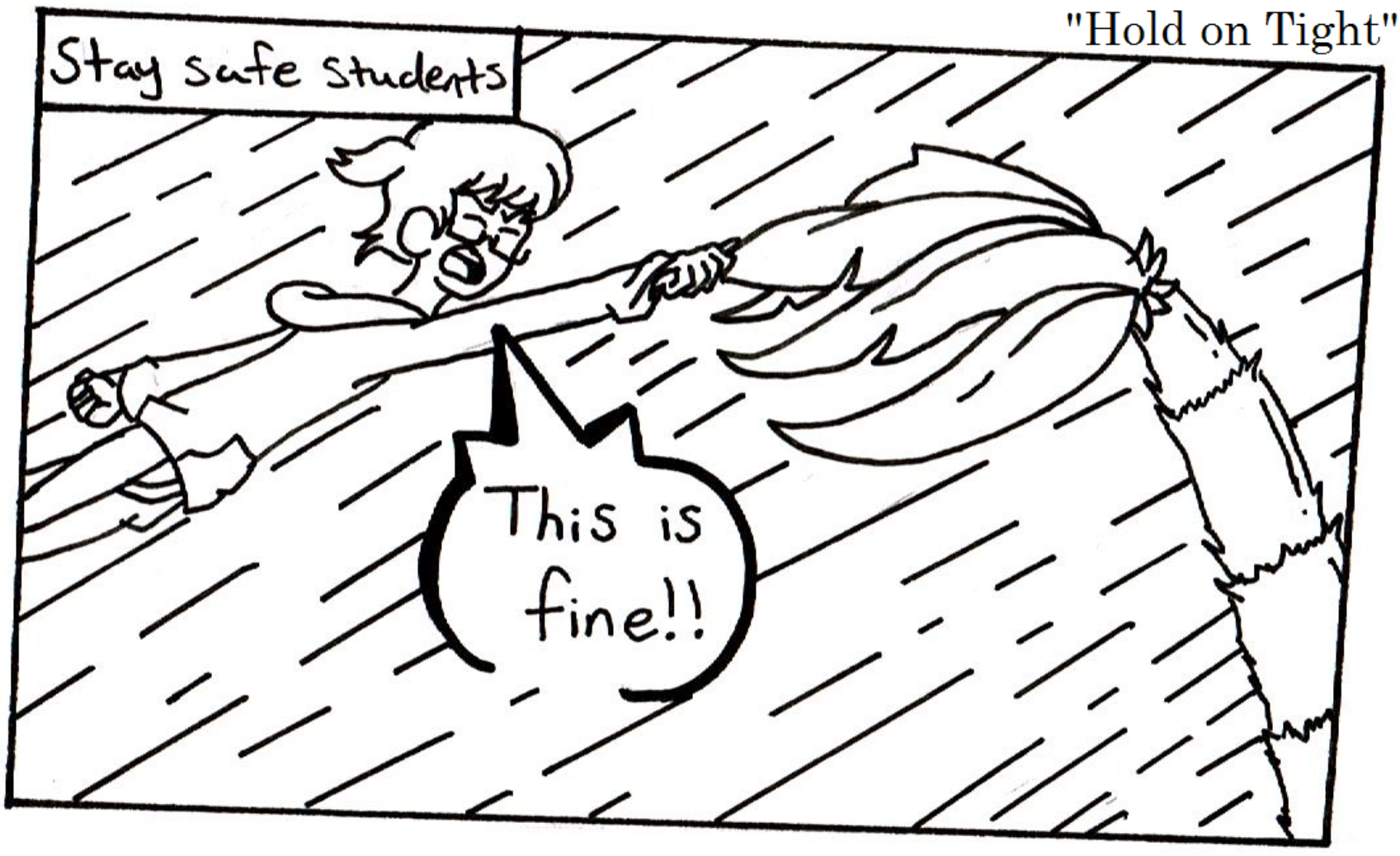


Campus News

The Freestyle Funny Comedy Show Brings the Laughs

By Chynna-Rose Foulkes
Contributing Writer

Nothing brings students together better than sharing a few good laughs. On Aug. 29, the Campus Activities Board presented "The Freestyle Funny Comedy Show." The free event was held in the SCC Boardrooms at 7:30 p.m.

Per their official website, theffcs.com, "The Freestyle Funny Comedy Show has been winning over audiences around the country with its unique approach to the live comedy experience since its creation late 2009. The Freestyle Funny Comedy Show is an entertaining mix of original stand-up, sharp improv, and amusing crowd interactive games."

The show is comprised of a group of young men that entertain the public with hilarious real-life jokes and games. The group consists of Brian "B Daht" McLaughlin, Anthony "Chico Bean" Bean, Darren "Big Baby" Brand, and DeMar "Osama Bin Drankin" Rankin, who was, unfortunately, unable to attend the performance. The comics were accompanied by the musical stylings of DJ Diwrection, Tampa's #1 Event DJ. Diwrection had the crowd rocking from side to side from the beginning to the end of the comedy show.

The comedy group is no stranger to the Saint Leo campus. According to Morgan Baum, assistant director of Student Activities, The Freestyle Funny Comedy Show is a "traditional event on campus, and they have performed four years consecutively."

Emily Alfaya, CAB Arts & Speakers Assistant, was excited to see the act return.

"The students on this campus love this event, and it felt wrong to do away with something that people get really excited about," said Alfaya. "The Freestyle Funny Comedy Show has been a staple event for Saint Leo students for the past couple of years. This event is the most hyped up event that people look forward to, and it's always great to bring them to campus."

The crowd was enthused and left speechless by the young men's talents. Several returning students were already familiar with the act and were excited to see them again. Others were seeing it for the first time, including Gwendolyn Basden, a freshman psychology major, who first heard about the event during Bingo night.

While she greatly enjoyed the comedy routine, Basden's chief complaint was with the venue. She, as well as many other students, felt the boardrooms to be too cramped and uncomfortable. Over 250 people were packed into the tight space.

But, despite the close quarters, students seemed to enjoy the event and Baum considers it to have been a great success. Many students are looking forward to more of CAB's planned activities, including a field trip to the Straz Center on Sept. 19 to see a production of the popular musical "RENT" and the Asia Project Show on Nov. 14.

Tiffany Jacobs, a junior sports business major with a minor in communications, said that campus events, such as the Freestyle Funny Comedy Show, remind her "to have fun in college."

Excited students stood in line in eager anticipation of the show.

DJ Diwrection really got the crowd going with his musical accompaniment.

Members of the Freestyle Funny Comedy Show happily posed for pictures with students after the event.

Photos by Chynna-Rose Foulks

National

Amazon-Whole Foods Merger Sparks Innovation

Marie Umholtz
Contributing Writer

Photo from Wikipedia Commons

As Whole Foods products begin to infiltrate Amazon's online platform, Amazon is taking a big step into brick-and-mortar retail. Amazon is selling Echo devices in Whole Foods locations, and Whole Foods will have Amazon Lockers for in-store pickup or return of orders.

Amazon closed its 13.7 billion dollar deal with Whole Foods Market on Monday, Aug. 28, 2017. Whole Foods, known as a pricier, upper-end retailer, began to cut prices that same day.

Before the acquisition, Whole Foods competed in the grocery market with its corporate values and quality products. Many customers were willing to pay a higher price for natural, organic, and responsibly sourced groceries at a company that takes pride in its values of health, community, and sustainability.

Whole Foods catered to a rather small pool of customers, but Amazon is working to bring in more customers with the promise of major price cuts and a rewards program for Prime members. Along with this price cut, Amazon is beginning to offer Whole Foods' private brand products online.

In his CNBC article, Joseph Cherian, assistant chair and teaching professor in the Department of Marketing at the University of Notre Dame, wrote, "according to estimates only 34 percent of U.S. households live within 5 miles of a Whole Foods store; a good number of consumers in the other two-thirds could be interested in purchasing Whole Food's private label products."

The deal not only opens more affordable and available options for quality and organic produce within Whole Foods, but also pushes for competition with other retailers, like Walmart.

Walmart is partnering with Google to improve customer service with more digital options. According to NPR, Walmart's products will be available on Google's shopping service, Google Express.

NPR elaborated, "Walmart customers will be able to place an order by simply saying it out loud, using either the Google Assistant app or the voice-activated speaker Google Home."

Mark Lore, president and CEO of Walmart U.S. eCommerce, said in Walmart's blog, "This will enable us to deliver highly personalized shopping recommendations based on customers' previous purchases, including those made in Walmart stores and on Walmart.com. To take advantage of this personalization, customers only need to link their Walmart account to Google Express."

Lore acknowledges that these innovations will spark competition and comparison, and he explained, "We know this means being compared side-by-side with other retailers, and we think that's the way it should be. An open and transparent shopping universe is good for customers."

Dr. Keith Jones, a professor of marketing at Saint Leo University with about 10 years of experience in retail, explains that he prefers to consider value over price competition. In addition, he projects that these competing companies and their broadening platforms will be able to improve customer experience and offer consumers a greater range and variety of available products.

Jones said retail needs to adjust to digital platforms because many consumers prefer "showrooming," where they look at a product in person before purchasing online, and the use of "omnichannels," which is where multiple platforms are made in a purchase decision.

Also, Cherian does not expect this adjustment to take off in the long run. For example, Amazon will install lockers in Whole Foods locations for customers pick up or return purchase, which he believes won't improve shipping services.

"Most [customers] would rather have their Amazon order delivered to their doorstep than making a trip to Whole Foods. Shipping is free either way," said Cherian in the CNBC article.

It is also argued that the company cultures of Amazon and Whole Foods differ too much to work well together. According to another CNBC article, there is a glaring problem with the acquisition due to the difference between Amazon and Whole Foods.

"One of the key lessons from decades of academic research on mergers and acquisitions (apart from the little-known fact that deals tend to fail at least as often as they succeed) is that related diversification tends to outperform unrelated diversification," said Craig Crossland, associate professor of business at Notre Dame in the CNBC article he wrote. "Amazon's is a culture of relentless, largely impersonal, efficiency, while Whole Foods has positioned itself as an organization that not only provides healthier, natural food, but also represents 'enlightened' values."

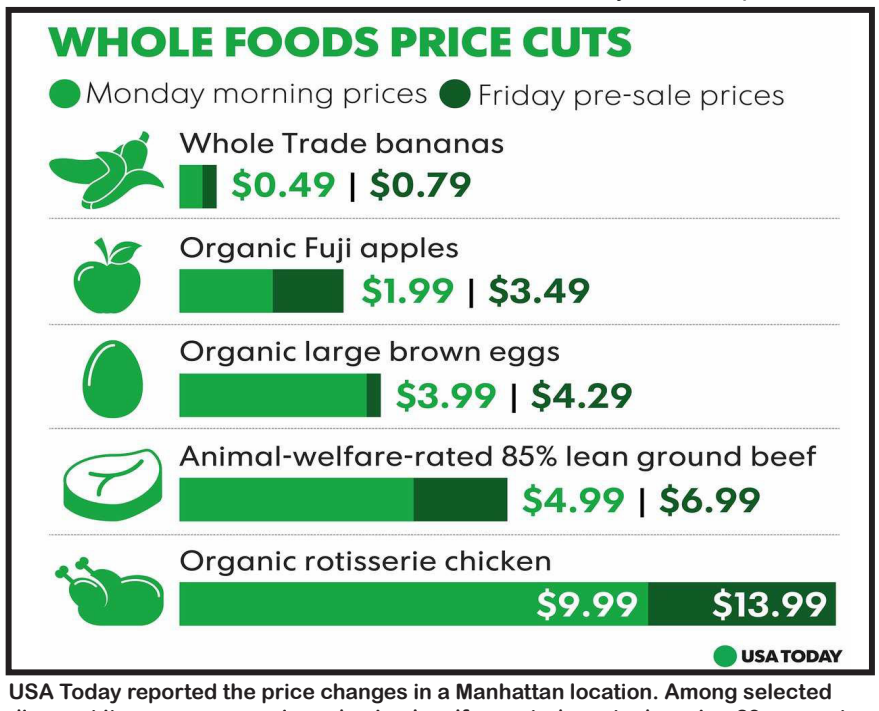
However, Jones thinks these innovations and culture differences will create a better customer experience. He explained that the lockers, for example, will eliminate the hassle of shipping and returning items purchased online.

Similarly, Jones believes that differences in corporate cultures could help both sides of the merger in the long run.

"I think we'll see Amazon try to establish or maintain certain pieces of the [Whole Foods] culture. The high-quality product will still be there, but with Amazon's purchasing power, they're going to change the distribution system, the piece of it that the consumer doesn't see. They're going to be able to get product in there at a less expensive price."

By adopting Whole Foods values, Amazon can combine a pleasant customer experience with its own efficiency and low-cost appeal, as Jones said, "What they'll have to drive home is 'why, other than price, should I come to your store?' That's where the value piece of Whole Foods comes in."

The new acquisition is met with both positive and negative feedback and outlooks for the future, but it will allow both parties the opportunity to evolve and combine their differences to create new approaches that could shape the retail industry. It has sparked innovative competition with other major retailers in the market, and only time will tell how these changes will shape the future of retail.



Picture from @USATODAY

USA Today reported the price changes in a Manhattan location. Among selected discount items were organic and animal-welfare-rated meats dropping 29 percent and a 43 percent price cut in organic Fuji apples.

Worldly

Costa Rica Going Green

Victoria Cavillo
Contributing Writer

Even though many countries are taking action to help reduce plastic pollution, Costa Rica is taking the biggest step any country has yet to enforce. Costa Rica plans to become the first country in the world to ban single-use plastic, expecting the full transition to take action in 2021.

Single use plastic is a big factor in the world's pollution issue, causing companies, such as the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRCD), to suggest people call out companies about their single use plastic habits. Single-use plastic products are made from plastic that is usually disposable after one use. Examples of the plastic items being banned are plastic cups and plastic cutlery. The banned products are going to be replaced by biodegradable alternatives.

Serious repercussions come from throwing away plastic items, especially if they are not disposed of properly.

Dr. Chris Miller, associate professor of Biology, said the biggest reprecussion is not a natural product, and plastic is everywhere, including in his office.

"It's only going to degrade to a certain extent," said Miller. "We made this stuff without really thinking about it, and it's ambiguous now."

Pollution is a rising issue around the world, with the biggest factor being plastic waste. This not only affects humans but also animals. According to the NRCD, there is a large amount of plastic garbage in every ocean on Earth, and this poses a threat to marine life. Miller agrees.

"The biggest concern is that the plastic will get into aquatic ecosystems, and when it gets into aquatic systems it breaks down into smaller pieces and then can be ingested by all sorts of organisms - by fish, shrimp, everything," said Miller. "When they ingest, it is a real concern because other organisms eat fish, including humans, so it kind of comes full circle."

According to Ocean Crusaders, plastic bags are the most seen item by boaters. These large amounts of plastic bags polluting the oceans are causing threats to the marine life inhabiting the aquatic environment.

"I don't think we have been very judicious with it [plastic]; it's a very big product that we really need to be careful with, because we constantly use it. It would be nearly impossible to completely remove it from society altogether. I think, though, we need to keep a careful watch on what happened because of it," said Miller.

Costa Rica is currently facing major problems with trash pollution in their nearby water sources; however, with the country's plans to ban single-use plastic, pollution will decrease and Costa Rica will be notably more eco-friendly.

"This is a good idea because Costa Rica has positioned themselves as an eco-friendly tourism place, which is one of their biggest profits over there. So, in doing this it demonstrates an ethic they want to propagate," stated Miller.

In fact, switching to biodegradable items is not Costa Rica's first initiative to living a greener lifestyle, as they are almost completely powered by renewable energy. Yale Environment 360 states, "The country, famous for its ecotourism industry, produces almost all of its electricity from renewable sources, with 80 percent coming from hydroelectric power."

Other countries that are also on their way to becoming more eco-friendly nations are Sweden, Scotland, Germany, and the United States, according to The Climate Reality Project.

In 2015, Sweden announced the country was eliminating fossil fuel usage, and switching completely to renewable energy sources. They immediately invested in solar and wind energy. Along with this major switch, they also included moving toward clean transportation.

The Climate Reality Project also mentioned that 2015 also marked the year that Scotland was conducting the equivalent amount of wind power it would take to run 97 percent of their nation's household electrical needs. Germany is also taking the lead, with being able to power up to 78 percent of their nation's power usage needs in a day. Also, the United States has the second highest, behind China, of wind used energy.

Also, there are countries implementing single use plastic initiatives. Some countries are doing this by putting an extra tax on purchases if one chooses to use a plastic bag, instead of paper. According to BigFatBags, Denmark began taxing retailers extra if they used plastic bags, instead of brown or reusable. This has caused stores to use reusable bags, as they do not want to be charged extra fees for using plastic. Also, some places around the world are stationing recycling bins in more areas, and selling reusable cloth grocery bags and/or paper bags.

"It [single use plastic initiatives] is a good idea because we need to start moving toward a better ecosystem, and the cost of dealing with plastic is a waste. Doing something about it will outweigh the benefits it provides society," said Miller.

All in all, there are many initiatives currently happening in the world to help single-use plastic issues, and hopefully this can result in lower rates of pollution.

Photo from @Momentum_UNFCCC

Costa Rica has problems with pollution with single use plastic but the coutnry is implemting policies, becoming even more eco-friendly.

Recycling Initiative on Campus

Victoria Cavillo
Contributing Writer

There are also ways on campus that Saint Leo is helping the issue. There are recycling bins stationed around campus, as well as students taking matters into their own hands. One SLU student encourages people to give her their used plastic bags, as she creates crafts out of them.

Katie Huettel, sophomore elementary education major, creates purses, wallets, mats, and large bags from the plastic bags she receives.

"I already crocheted before, but when I heard about how plastic bags were 'junking' up the world, I decided I could use them to crochet them," said Huettel.

Last year, Huettel made mats out of plastic bags for people who are homeless, with them also being able to use them as blankets.

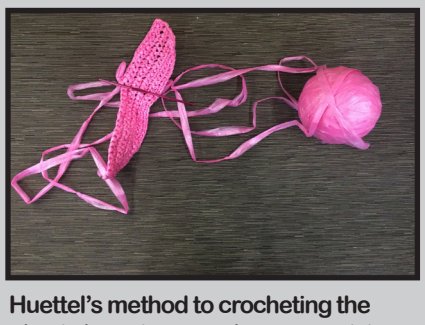
"My friend was doing a project for her girl scout award, and I decided to help her out," said Huettel.

Huettel adds, "A Nigerian missionary introduced me to the idea, and ever since then I have enjoyed doing it. Also, I found a way to cut the bags in a specific way, so that I use every part of it, leaving no scraps to throw away."

Huettel encourages all students and faculty to drop off any unwanted plastic bags and/or magazines to Kirk Hall, room 120 or 121, located near the CAVE.

Huettel's motto is, "Trash into Treasure" as evdent with her crocheted knick knacks.

Huettel customizes and sells her creations she makes from plastic bags.



Huettel's method to crocheting the plastic bags is to cut them, wrap it into a ball, and work on it throughout the day.

Photos by Victoria Cavillo

Sports

The Rush to the Super Bowl

By Vincent Pensabene
Sports Editor

The National Football League is the number one in programming on five different networks. For the first time since February 5, when the New England Patriots made a historic comeback against the Atlanta Falcons, actual football is back! Fans are finally finished watching meaningless preseason football and now get to watch the games that matter.

This offseason was filled with inequality in football, CTE studies, and Ezekiel Elliot doing too much but with the season starting up, here is the official predictions of who will win Super Bowl 52.

The AFC East is one of the easiest divisions to predict in football with the reigning Super Bowl champions and the rest of the mediocre teams in the division. The Patriots, now without wideout Julian Edelman, still have the most talented offense that Tom Brady has ever had. The Miami Dolphins have called to a retired Jay Cutler to replace an injured Ryan Tannehill, the only bright side being that Cutler had his best statistical year with Dolphins' Head Coach Adam Gase.

The Buffalo Bills did their best tanking job that they can do by sending Sammy Watkins to the Rams and signing Anquan Boldin, who retired just thirteen days later. However, their tanking job was not even the best in their division, as the New York Jets won at something this offseason, lose the most talent. The Jets' offseason consisted of losing their top two receivers in Brandon Marshall and Eric Decker, their top 2 quarterbacks in Ryan Fitzpatrick and Geno Smith, trading away Sheldon Richardson, and losing their best receiver due to injury. The race to the first overall pick in the draft is on.

AFC East Standings
New England Patriots14-2
Miami Dolphins 9-7
Buffalo Bills 6-10
New York Jets 1-15

The AFC North is a division filled with the Steelers and middle-of-the-road teams. The Pittsburgh Steelers have one of the most prolific offenses in the NFL with Ben Roethlisberger, Antonio Brown, and Le'Veon Bell. Also, improving their defense with picking up cornerback Joe Haden from the Cleveland Browns to their stellar group.

The Cincinnati Bengals had a solid draft but not enough to edge out Pittsburgh. Rookie running back Joe Mixon has had his off-the-field issues prior to the draft so it will be interesting to see if he can stay out of his own way.
The Baltimore Ravens are entering the season with a very lackluster running attack. They will have issues scoring this upcoming season but the defensive unit will make things interesting.

Finally, the Cleveland Browns. What else should be said? They improved with drafting DeShone Kizer as he has a chance to have Dak Prescott-esque results without the wins. The team is improving with some rookies they drafted, but not enough to get out of the basement of the AFC West.

AFC North
Pittsburgh Steelers11-5
Cincinnati Bengals8-8
Baltimore Ravens8-8
Cleveland Browns5-11

The AFC West is filled with question marks as the Oakland Raiders are attempting to recapture the magic they had while waiting to move to Las Vegas. They signed a former Super Bowl winner, retired Marshawn Lynch. The Raiders won nine one-possession games last year and will not have that same result. Derek Carr is returning off an injury that kept him out of the playoffs last year and has a better team with a little worse results.
The Los Angeles Chargers are the team people will be surprised by. The young defensive core will be better in their new system, along with veteran quarterback Phillip Rivers leading the way, this team will make LA buzz a little bit.

The Kansas City Chiefs have a tough schedule as half their games are against teams that were in the playoffs last season. Alex Smith will have to bridge as the Chiefs get ready for Patrick Mahomes II to take control.

An aging team will be exposed more this year. Denver has an array of issues on offense, especially at quarterback. They tried to fix it by bringing back Brock Osweiler but he won't be enough to help that defense stay off the field.

AFC West
Oakland Raiders10-6
Los Angeles Chargers9-7
Kansas City Chiefs8-8
Denver Broncos6-10

The Tennessee Titans have a good offense around Marcus Mariota, who is coming off a season where he threw 26 touchdowns and 9 interceptions. They added cornerback Logan Ryan from the Patriots and have a particularly easy schedule.

The Indianapolis Colts have a major question mark at quarterback as Andrew Luck has been anything but lucky recovering from a lacerated kidney and still has minimal offensive line support.

The Houston Texans have gotten their franchise star JJ Watt back from injury but they go to Seattle, Baltimore, and New England. They had a strong defensive core for a few years but they haven't done much with it.

The Jacksonville Jaguars round off the division, they are talented but throw too many interceptions in Blake Bortles, even in the preseason.

AFC South
Tennessee Titans11-5
Indianapolis Colts10-6
Houston Texans8-8
Jacksonville Jaguars5-11

The NFC East is the most compelling division in football as all four teams have a chance to be special. The Philadelphia Eagles have improved tremendously with the additions of Alshon Jeffrey and Jordy Matthews. Carson Wentz will be even better this season and that is why they will win the division.

Photos by @JRSportsReports

Superstars, rookies and fans alike, are excited about the beginning of the NFL season.

Sports

The Dallas Cowboys have a question, as of this writing, about Ezekiel Elliot's possible suspension. With the six games he was given, that plays a big factor into their record. Dallas, just like Oakland, can be a better team with worse results.

The New York Giants improved their roster to give Eli Manning more weapons with Brandon Marshall to relieve Odell Beckham Jr.

The Washington Redskins have issues that stem from if they want Kirk Cousins as their quarterback since their owner can't even remember his name. Their division record will cost them a chance at the playoffs.

NFC East
Philadelphia Eagles10-6
Dallas Cowboys10-6
New York Giants8-8
Washington Redskins7-9

The Green Bay Packers are a very talented group led by Aaron Rodgers. The weapons Rodgers has are all still there so there will be no change in their standing in the division. The Minnesota Vikings have moved on from their franchise player Adrian Peterson and the team looks good. Sam Bradford just has to do enough until Teddy Bridgewater can return, the defense will step up to make them relevant.

The Detroit Lions have the richest player in NFL history in Matt Stafford, but that doesn't mean his contract will equal wins. Not much help on offense will prove to be their downfall.

The Chicago Bears are bridging to the future with Mitch Trubisky and will have to wait another year for any meaningful games.

NFC North
Green Bay Packers12-4
Minnesota Vikings9-7
Detroit Lions8-8
Chicago Bears2-14

The Seattle Seahawks got even deeper with their front seven with the addition of Sheldon Richardson. The Seahawks will be a team that has flashes of their old selves.

The Los Angeles Rams are definitely bouncing back from last year where they barely could move the ball. Jared Goff will have a better season this year and their record will show it.

The Arizona Cardinals had their window of opportunity closing and it looks like it will be shut. Larry Fitzgerald is getting closer to retirement and the team needs their defense to step up.

San Francisco 49ers have too many questions and not enough answers. This will be another season of rebuilding.

NFC West
Seattle Seahawks10-6
Los Angeles Rams7-9
Arizona Cardinals7-9
San Francisco 49ers6-10

The Carolina Panthers will bounce back with Cam Newton and Christian McCaffrey being threats that defenses will have a hard time figuring out.

The Atlanta Falcons will have a Super Bowl hangover and their offense won't have the same invincibility that it had a season ago.

The Tampa Bay Buccaneers will show signs of improvement but in a stacked division, will not have the results they are looking for.

The New Orleans Saints are getting too old with Adrian Peterson and Drew Brees. Five years ago, this team would be scary, now it'll be if they can stay on the field.

NFC South
Carolina Panthers10-6
Atlanta Falcons8-8
Tampa Bay Buccaneers8-8
New Orleans Saints6-10

The playoff seeding in the AFC would be: New England, Pittsburg, Tennessee, Oakland, LA Chargers, Miami while the NFC would be: Green Bay, Seattle, Carolina, Philadelphia, Dallas, Minnesota. The Wild Card round would have Tennessee, Oakland, Carolina, and Dallas advance.

The Divisional round would have matchups of Oakland vs New England, Tennessee vs Pittsburgh, Dallas vs Green Bay, and Carolina vs Seattle. The winners would be New England, Pittsburgh, Dallas, and Carolina. The Championship round would have the Patriots beating the Steelers and Dallas defeating Carolina.

Super Bowl 52 would have New England face Dallas. New England has too many weapons and would repeat with Tom Brady winning MVP. This could be the highest-watched football season to date but only time can tell. Intriguing matchups and big-market playoff teams can be the reason the season will ultimately be successful.

Photos from Twitter @DallasCowboys

Dallas will try to continue their success from last season into this season.

Upcoming Games for the Week of 9/8/17 - 9/14/17

Men's Soccer

9/10: @ Montevallo
7:00 p.m.

Women's Volleyball

9/8- vs Montevallo
1:00 p.m.

9/8- vs West Texas A&M
7:30 p.m.

9/9- vs Truman State
3:30p.m.

9/9- vs Sioux Falls (S.D.)
7:30 p.m.

Have you ever been interested in learning about Fantasy Football?
If so, check out the new article
Fantasy Football 101
Now online at
https://prideonlinedotnet.word*press.com*/

Arts & Entertainment

Game Review

Kicking Off With Madden 2018

By Collin Moran
Contributing Writer

Photo from Twitter @EASPORTSMadden

Madden 2018 offers its players numerous oppurtunities to play as their favorite players.

With football season right around the corner, this year's edition of Madden will impress any fan of the sport. The all new graphics system in Madden NFL 18 will make anyone feel like they are watching a game on television.

Classic fan favorite game modes like Ultimate Team and Connected Franchise make a strong return, along with an all new single player story that allows the player to go from high school and play up to the professional level. Each of these different modes come together to make Madden feel like one of the most complete sports games on the market. Many aspects of the game have remained the same over the last few years, and while that can be bad thing for most games, it tends to be a positive for a game franchise whose fans expect a specific style of gameplay year after year.

Madden may be the only football game on the market, but that doesn't stop the developers from trying to impress buyers each year. The enhanced graphics and the improved game modes will keep people coming back for more, and this instalment may even be regarded as the best Madden to date.In most cases, sports games don't have a lot to offer in terms of game modes, but that is where this games exceeds.

Players are able to compete in standard NFL games right from the main menu, whether it is against a computer opponent or another player online. Madden now offers a way to play exact matchups from the NFL depending on what week it is. Play as your favorite team in a certain week and then you can continue to the play out the rest of the season if you choose to.

The most popular piece of the game is the returning Ultimate Team mode where players collect cards of current and former NFL stars that are used to piece together their ideal team. Ultimate Team is based online where cards are bought with in game currency and can be sold on an auction market to other people in the community.

This mode can get extremely addictive with hundreds of challenges to complete for currency. Players just have to be careful because the game does encourage the purchase of micro-transactions using real money to buy extra in game currency. The other big part of the Madden NFL 18 gameplay experience is the Connected Franchise mode.

This game mode has been in Madden for a number of years now and is a fan favorite for people who love to take over a team as the owner, head coach, or star player. Being an owner or a coach allows players to play each game for their team, as well as making roster decisions and business decisions involving ticket prices and stadium upgrades.

Connected Franchise also allows someone to create a player and play as any position on the offense or defense. It is a fun way to practice your skills and stay away from spending any extra money like in Ultimate Team.

The game mode can also be played with up to 31 other people all taking over a team or creating a player.For the first time in franchise history, Madden is introducing a single player story mode that is similar to modes in NBA 2K and FIFA. The new story called Longshot lets the player assume the character of Devin Wade, a former star quarterback in high school looking for one last shot to make it to the NFL. Longshot mode gives players a couple hours of playtime that feel mostly like a movie with a little bit of gameplay added in.

This story mode isn't as complete as NBA 2K MyCareer mode, but it gives the series a new idea to play with, and could have some big potential in future games. Longshot is a refreshing add-in for this years game.

This year, EA decided to add their impressive Frostbite graphics engine to the game. These are the same graphics that are featured in titles such as Battlefield 1 and Star Wars Battlefront. The improved graphics make the gameplay and cutscenes look photo realistic and the game feels even more like an actual NFL game on television.

Players and stadiums have a lot more detail this year and make the game feel even more authentic. Other sports games such as NBA 2K and MLB The Show still have a better graphics presentation, but Madden has made big strides this year and only figures to get better with future versions of the game.

Sports games get more realistic every year, and Madden is leading the charge with great graphics and an authentic gameplay experience. The game comes with a lot of replay value and should receive a lot of talk over the next couple months with the NFL season getting ready to start. This may be regarded as the best installment of the franchise yet and is definitely worth a try for any gamer who likes football.

The gameplay should feel familiar to past games but it has made strides to feel more realistic than ever. Madden 18 is an impressive game and should be one of the top sellers of this fall.

Game Review Score:
4/5 Paws